

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

The specification as amended below with replacement paragraphs shows added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~.

Please REPLACE the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 24, with the following paragraph:

In order to achieve the above-mentioned object, a speech data compression/expansion apparatus of the present invention includes: a dictionary data input part for extracting speech data containing waveform data from an existing speech waveform dictionary and inputting the extracted speech data;

a compression position determining part for specifying a part used for speech synthesis in the waveform data, and setting a starting point and an ending point for compression before and after the part;

a dictionary data compression part for compressing the waveform data with respect to a compression interval specified by the starting point and the ending point for compression; and a dictionary data expansion part for expanding the compressed waveform data,

wherein the specified compression interval, in which an expansion result of the compressed waveform data has highest quality, is determined as a compression/expansion position, and the compressed waveform data, and the ~~staring~~starting point and the ending point for compression are registered in a database as the waveform data used for speech synthesis.